scheme, the power to make compassionate appointment has been decentralised and vests in respective Ministry/Department/Head of Department. As such, information in this regard is not centrally collected/maintained.

(b) Appointment on compassionate grounds depends, among other things, on the availability of a vacancy for that purpose. however, the existing scheme provides for consideration of applications received in the previous month during the second week of every month and it envisages grant of compassionate appointment within a year in really deserving cases if vacancy meant for such appointment is available within the prescribed ceiling of 5% of direct recruitment vacancies in Group C/D posts.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Appointment on compassionate grounds can be given anywhere under the Government of India depending upon availability of a suitable vacancy meant for the purpose of compassionate appointment. If sufficient vacancies are not available in any particular office to accommodate really deserving cases within a year, it is open to the administrative Ministry/ Department/Office to take up the matter with other Ministries/Departments/ Offices of the Government of India to provide them such appointment at an early date.

(e) Does not arise.

Reduction in the Length of Service for Voluntary Retirement

1364. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is proposal for downsizing the Ministries/Departments;

(b) if so, the steps being taken in this regard;

(c) whether there is any proposal for reducing the length of service required for seeking voluntary retirement from 20 to 15 years under consideration; and

(d) if not, Government would consider doing it as a measure for downsizing the Ministries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Finance (Department of

Expenditure) has been issuing instructions from time to time to control creation of Plan and Non-Plan posts and thereby to reduce the expenditure on establishment. In August, 1999, instructions were issued by that ministry to all the Ministries/Departments, inter alia, to undertake a review of all the posts which were lying vacant in the Ministries/Departments and in their attached and Subordinate Offices, etc. in consultation with the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure). These instructions envisage that till the review is completed, no vacant posts will be filled up except with the approval of the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure). Further, such Ministries/ Departments as had not fully implemented the Government's decision to achieve 10% reduction in the number of posts (as on 1.1.1992), have been asked to implement that decision immediately. According to the information available with the Ministry of Finance, approximately 1.83 lakh posts have been abolished in various Ministries/Departments as a result of this exercise.

(c) and (d) There is no proposal under the consideration of the Government for reducing the length of service required for seeking voluntary retirement from 20 to 15 years. However, Rule 29 of the Central Civil Services (Pension) Rules, 1972 provides that in case a Government servant is declared surplus to the establishment in which he was serving and is eligible for the facility of being re-deployed through the Central (Surplus Staff) Cell located in the Department of Personnel and Training, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions or in the case of a Group 'D' employed through the Directorate General, Employment and Training, Ministry of Labour and opts to retire voluntarily, instead of seeking re-deployment, he/she shall be entitled to have 5 years added to the qualifying service rendered by him/her provided that:

(i) the length of such service is not less than 15 years (as against 20 years in case of Central Government employees in general) on the date on which he/she exercises such option and the qualifying length of service after taking into account the aforesaid addition is not more than the service he/she could have rendered had he/she retired on the date of his/her superannuation; and

(ii) the option to retire is exercised and is communicated to the authority competent to sanction pension within a period of two months from the date from which the employee concerned has been declared surplus.